

MM



CITY OF GRAND RAPIDS AGENDA ACTION REQUEST

DATE: July 9, 2019

TO: Mark Washington, City Manager

COMMITTEE: Committee of the Whole

LIAISON: Mark Washington, City Manager

FROM: Doug Matthews,
Executive Office

SUBJECT: Resolution establishing a Task Force on Elected Representation

On June 11, 2019, the City Commission discussed and received a presentation offering options to consider changes to the electoral and representation structures for the City of Grand Rapids. Because of the complexity and potential unknown/unintended impacts of changes advocated by citizen-led groups, the Commission asked that staff formalize a proposal and structure for a representative task force that might receive and review information, research and testimony on the impacts of advocated changes, as well as any potential alternatives.

The attached resolution would create an 11-member Task Force on Elected Representation, with specific recommendations regarding representation, structure, timelines and deliverables for the Task Force proceedings.

YOUR COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE recommends adoption of the following resolution establishing the Task Force on Elected Representation.

WHEREAS:

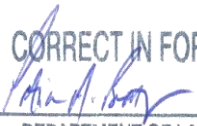
1. The City Commission is committed to deliberative, transparent and responsive government; and
2. The citizen interest groups have expressed a desire to examine and possibly change elections schedules and models for elected representation; and
3. These matters will have both immediate and long-term impacts on the citizens of Grand Rapids, their participation and their representation with local government; and
4. The City Commission wishes to be thorough and avoid unintended consequences that may have disparate effects on voters, specifically under-represented communities and communities of color; and
5. The City Commission believes there is value in learning from other communities' experiences, academic research and thoughtful deliberation;

RESOLVED:

1. A Task Force on Elected Representation is created and will be comprised of eleven members drawn from the Grand Rapids community. Each Commissioner shall have one appointment, with the Mayor appointing two Task Force members. City staff will identify and invite participation from the following three professional fields and/or organizations including: academic study that includes public administration, political science and/or public policy; the Grand Rapids Democracy Initiative (GRDI); and Empower the Citizens; and
2. Appointments shall reflect the diversity of the Grand Rapids community.
3. Professional staff from the City of Grand Rapids shall serve in an advisory and ex-officio role from the following departments/offices: the City Manager's Office, the City Clerk, the Law Department, and Fiscal Services; and
4. The Task Force shall elect a chair and vice-chair at its first meeting; and
5. As part of its proceedings, the Task Force shall conduct at least one (1) meeting in each Ward that is open for public input; and

6. That the City Manager is encouraged to seek third-party facilitation for the proceedings of the Task Force; and
7. That the Task Force provide a report and any associated recommendations, along with fiscal, operational or electoral implications, to the City Commission for further consideration no later than December 17, 2019.

Prepared by Alicia Bernt

CORRECT IN FORM

DEPARTMENT OF LAW